

The Bowery Boys Sue For Defamation Of Character

Jonathan David Steinhoff, 5.5.2008

(an oblique addressing of the misperception
that one's role in a gang must set one's course for life)

The Bowery Boys are a few years older, and are they ever angry. They're in court, suing and counter-suing each other for defamation of character owing to things said back when they were a gang. So Slip dared to call Zatch a knucklehead? So Zatch dared to imply Whitey had a screw loose? Zatch may have expressed it in pantomime, using sign language when Whitey wasn't looking to indicate Whitey was crazy, "but yer honor, ain't it the same ting?" "Oh yeah, you lousy, why I oughta-" "You hear dat, yer honor, he's doing it again!" "I did not, I said 'you lousy', but I didn't finish the sentence. I coulda, but I am too refined." "Yeah, too refined." "Did you hear that, your honor? He was sarcastic about the idea of me being refined. I've never been so insulted." In the end, the judge decrees that each owes money to the others, but when totalled up, all break even except Slip, who comes out three dollars ahead. He calls them all jerks in his delight, and so is made to give up the three dollars as a result.